



# Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Pedagogy

**Westerly High School** 

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Welcome! As we begin our work for the '21-22 school year, please complete this form so we are able to collect accurate attendance data. Thank you!

Link to Form

bit.ly/Hlwelcome







OUR MISSION -

Highlander Institute partners with communities to imagine and create more equitable, relevant and effective schools. Using research, we convene, coach and build capacity to improve outcomes and experiences for all students.

- OUR VISION -

Students, educators and communities partnering as agents of change to design:

Classrooms that empower Schools that adapt Systems that liberate

### Westerly Public Schools & The Westerly Teachers' Association

We know that honesty in education is best for all students. Education for our Westerly students should be rooted in facts and truth, even if some of those are difficult facts at times, and even if some of those are unfortunate truths about the history of Rhode Island and the United States.

Rhode Island is a growing, thriving, rich and diverse state. Our students come from diverse backgrounds from a range of lived experiences. Our students will be more successful if they recognize and understand the facts, truth, and complexity of that diversity and the history of different people and their different life experiences.

#### How is that accomplished? Through Culturally Responsive Teaching.

A full education is one that examines the history of diverse groups - including those who have historically been marginalized and underrepresented at times and over time. We all learn by critically examining the views and lives of others.



# Systemic Inequity

breeds disengagement and under-develops students' natural cognitive skills, which undermines their confidence and potential.

# Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Pedagogy

restores natural confidence and competence by bringing the most powerful teaching to students who have been marginalized by systemic inequity.

#### **Agenda**

Introductions & Opening

Context & Starting with ourselves

Intro to Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Pedagogy Framework

- 1. Sociocultural Awareness
- 2. Awareness of who is carrying the Cognitive Load

Survey & Closing

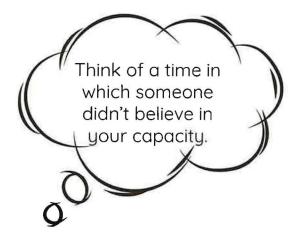
#### **Today's Objectives**

- Understand how a culturally responsive & sustaining framework can help restore competence & confidence to historically marginalized students
- Introduce Domain 1: Awareness
- Examine how elements of the Awareness domain inform expectations and teaching practices

### **Overarching Goals**

- We want to clarify our roles in disrupting inequity in our classrooms
- We want to unite as a school community to create the conditions for all of us to feel successful in supporting all students
- We want to nurture a sense of community and learning that centers our students & families

### **Storytime Opener**



- What did it feel like?
- How did it affect you?



- What did it feel like?
- How did it affect you?

How does systemic racism manifest itself in the education experience for students?

### **Short History Lesson**



### Video Reflection

#### While watching:

- What connections did you make from this video?
- What thoughts and feelings came up for you?

#### Group Discussion: The 3 Y's Protocol (Los 3 Por qué)

- Why might this matter to me?
- Why might it matter to my students and their families?
- Why might it matter beyond our classrooms and school?

#### Record group discussion here

### **Additional Context**

- A 'Forgotten History' Of How The U.S. Government Segregated America
- Good School, Rich School; Bad School, Poor School
- A Research Synthesis / Unequal School Funding in the United States
- The systemic racism black Americans face, explained in 9 charts

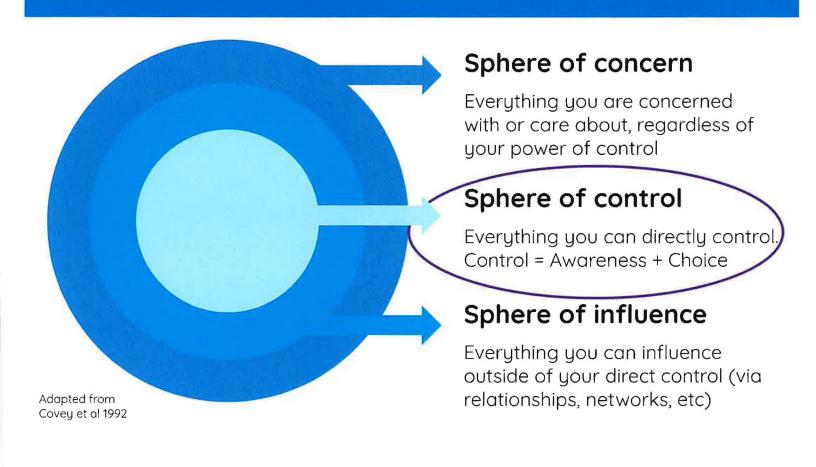
Is systemic inequity too big for me to make a difference?

### **Antiracist Teaching**

"Antiracist teaching is not just about acknowledging that racism exists, but consciously *committing* to the struggle of fighting for racial justice" (p. 54, 2019).

~ Betting Love

What is my role as an educator/leader?
What is within my control?



How do I challenge systemic inequity as an educator?



# Systemic Inequity

breeds disengagement and under-develops students' natural cognitive skills, which undermines their confidence and potential.

# Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Pedagogy

restores natural confidence and competence by bringing the most powerful teaching to students who have been marginalized by systemic inequity.

### **Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Pedagogy**

Leveraging the identities and cultures of diverse learners not only to make learning more effective for and relevant to students, but also to foster and sustain cultural pluralism, ultimately for the purpose of social transformation

We can disrupt the impact of educational inequity and empower students to transform their own lives, their communities, and society.

### **Theory of Change**

#### IF WE

- Build awareness about how systemic inequities translate into our schools.
- Learn about students' cultures and build trust & belonging.
- Nurture cultures of thinking by developing academic mindsets.

#### **THEN**

- Students' cognitive skills, mastery, competence, and engagement will improve.
- Students' self efficacy and confidence will improve.
- Students will be empowered to use their skills in meaningful and transformative ways.

#### WHY?

To ensure students become self-directed learners & empowered leaders who will transform their lives, their communities, & society

A FRAMEWORK FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE & SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY (CRSP)





### Domain #1: Awareness

#### Domain Explanation

When we start with ourselves and recognize that we all operate within an inequitable system, we can start to understand how systemic inequity translates into our classrooms and schools. So in this domain, we build awareness about all the layers of context around our students and we build awareness of who is carrying the cognitive load. The goal is to use this awareness to move away from compliance-oriented teaching that produces passive learners.

- Develop socio-cultural awareness
- Develop awareness about who is carrying the cognitive load





### **Domain #2: Community Building**

Domain Explanation Rooted in this awareness, we learn to build community and nurture academic mindsets so that students are engaging in productive struggle and supporting one another through challenging tasks.

- Build a culture of trust and belonging
- Build a culture of thinking



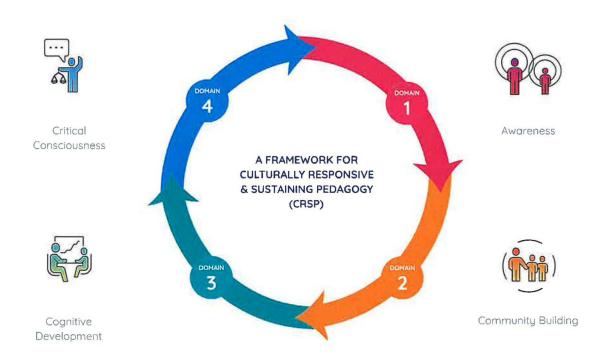


### **Domain #3: Cognitive Development**

#### Domain Explanation

Leveraging relationships, a mindset around equity, and learning science to disrupt a culture of low expectations & shift the cognitive load to students by developing their information processing skills.

- Leverage students' identities and interests to make learning meaningful
- Scaffold and develop students' thinking skills
- Use data and assessment to support students to own their learning journeys





### **Domain #4: Critical Consciousness**

### Domain Explanation

Supporting students to understand how cognitive skills empower them to move from critical reflection to critical motivation to critical action so they can transform their lives, communities, and society

- Engage students in critical reflection
- Nurture critical motivation
- Inspire critical action





### Domain #1: Awareness

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#### **Key Practices**

- Develop socio-cultural awareness
- Develop awareness about who is carrying the cognitive load

### **Sociocultural Awareness**

- Sociocultural awareness is a deep understanding of one's own worldview and the recognition that it is not universal.
- As culturally responsive teachers, we recognize that our cultures & experiences inform our worldviews and those of our students. And we acknowledge that the experiences, concepts, and language they bring can be built upon and expanded to help them learn even more (constructivist approach)

Thus, we work to avoid practices that mainly advantage dominant groups by affirming and welcoming different cultural expressions. To do this, we have to learn about our students' identities and cultures.

### **Cultural Iceberg**

Share in the chat:

What is one aspect of your deeper cultural identity?

Behaviours and artifacts Accessible to the senses

Observable

**Explicit** 

Taught

Conscious

**The What** 

The Why

Attitudes, beliefs, expectations, values, assumptions
Intangible
Not directly observable
Implicit
Caught

Subconscious



Focus on restraint in showing emotion or expressing emotion?



Focus on the rule or focus on the context



Sense of self & success is defined by one's individual goals or defined by collective wellbeing & belonging

Individualism	Collectivism
Focused on independence and individual achievement	Focuses on interdependence and group success
Emphasizes self-reliance and the belief that one is supposed to take care of themselves to get ahead	Emphasizes reliance on the collective wisdom or resources of the group and the belief that group members take care of each other to get ahead
Learning happens through individual study and reading	Learning happens through group interaction and dialogue
Individual contributions and status are important	Group dynamics and harmony are important
Competitive	Collaborative
Technical/Analytical	Relational

Many \*BIPOC\* students come from collectivist cultural backgrounds

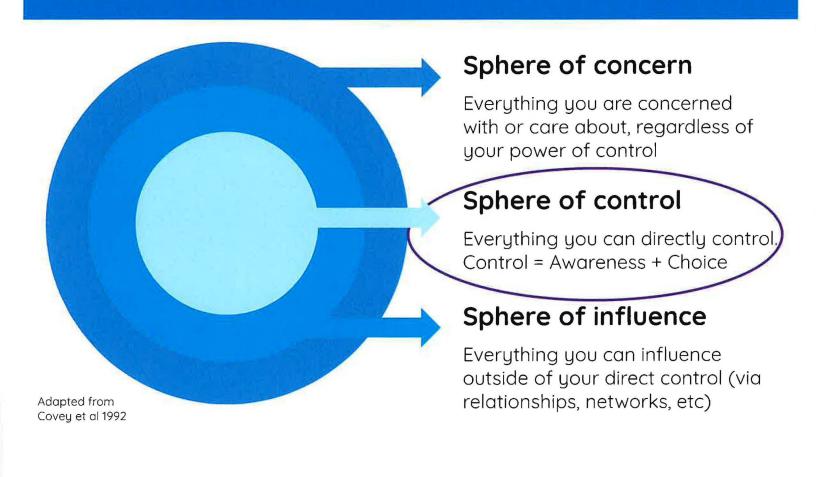
Research shows that promoting collaboration over competition helps create a culture of thinking because it shows students that everyone can achieve. (Carr & Walton, 2011)

Hammond, Zaretta. Culturally Responsive Teaching & The Brain. Thousand Oaks, CA, Corwin, 2015.

#### **Breakout Discussion**

- What do you notice about how all of us responded to each cultural dimension?
- How does your orientation for each of these play out in the classroom?
- What do you want to learn more about with regard to your students & these cultural dimensions?

Record on this **Padlet** 



## How Do Your Teaching Practices Support Learners Across all 3 Cultural Dimensions?

Cultural Dimension	Classroom Strategies	
Universalism vs Particularism	Build Community with	
How might you co-construct classroom agreements?	Shared Agreements	
Neutral vs Affective	Survey Strategy	
How might you gather this information & support students however they respond?		
Individualism vs Collectivism	Community Walk	
How might you gather information about students' identities and engage them in reflection about how they experience individual vs collective learning?	Journaling Prompts	

## **Strategy Exploration**

- Read about these strategies <u>here</u>
  - Survey to learn about some ways students' cultures show up in the classroom
  - Community walk to build awareness about students' communities
  - Journaling prompts to better understand students' values and priorities
- Discussion & debrief



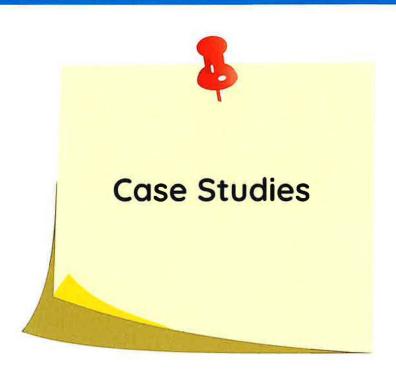
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## What might this look like?

- Develop socio-cultural awareness
- Develop awareness about who is carrying the cognitive load



#### Student #1

Student #1 is reading three grade levels below where he should be but does not have any diagnosed learning disabilities. When introduced to you, one teacher told you he has failed every grade but gets pushed through and that his family members don't even have high school diplomas. It really seems they don't care about education. His guardian has cancelled multiple appointments with you so it's clear she doesn't respect your time. The student gives up easily and seems disengaged with many activities. But you care about him and want him to do well so you heavily scaffold them to prevent him from getting stuck. But when asked to sit down and get back to work, he refuses and distracts others while you're trying to get them to work quietly. Even during collaboration time, he struggles to stay on task and, instead, gets distracted by the social aspect of his group so you move him to work by himself, but consequences don't seem to make a difference in his behavior. It's clear he doesn't care despite how hard you're working, so you're worried he won't make it to grade-level.

#### **Breakout Discussion**

What are your initial thoughts about this student & his needs from the information given?

What course of action might you take to engage him and improve his academic achievement?

#### Student #2

Student #2 has grown multiple grade levels in reading this year but is not yet at grade level. He is very artistic and often creates incredible drawings of what's going on in class. He is an abstract thinker, marches to the beat of his own drum, and demonstrates leadership in the classroom - in fact, many of his classmates follow his example. When learning about ratios, he struggles at first, and you and his classmates remind him that it's ok to be in the "learning pit." He remembers that the feeling of frustration is normal, and when prompted with thinking strategies you practiced as a class and examples he could relate to, he makes connections to baking with his grandmother. You often reach out to her to share his learning connections but she works multiple jobs and is raising this student and his cousins. So you send her emails with updates, resources, and feedback. Today, you're emailing her about his leadership during project time and sharing the way he cared enough to ensure that his group members were all getting along. You also share resources he can use at home for reading practice and tell her you know he'll get to grade-level.

#### **Breakout Discussion**

What are your initial thoughts about this student & his needs from the information given?

What course of action might you take to engage him and improve his academic achievement?

## **Debrief Questions**

- When we believe in kids' capacities, where do we spend most of our time?
- When we understand aspects of kids' deep culture, how do we plan & teach differently?
- What do you think learning looks like for students like #1? Why? What are the implications?
- What do you think learning looks like for students like #2? Why? What are the implications?

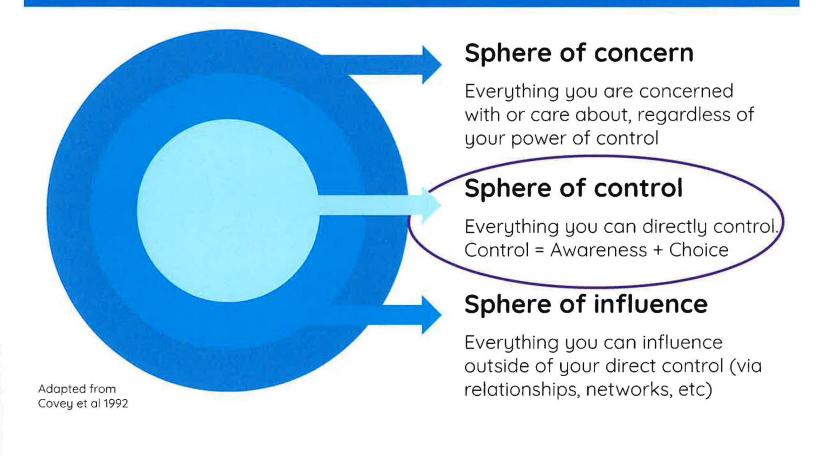
## **How Are We Spending Most of Our Time?**

Compliance	Engagement
<ul> <li>Sharing information ("filling buckets")</li> <li>Giving directions</li> <li>Monitoring "seatwork"</li> <li>Over-scaffolding assignments</li> <li>Giving tests</li> <li>Settling disputes</li> <li>Punishing noncompliance</li> <li>Giving grades</li> <li>Low-medium-high groups</li> <li>Policing bodies</li> <li>Expecting stillness and silence</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Involving students in planning</li> <li>Engaging students in big ideas</li> <li>Building bridges between prior knowledge/ideas and new knowledge</li> <li>Engaging in productive struggle</li> <li>Nurturing academic mindset</li> <li>Scaffolding/developing cognitive skills</li> <li>Engaging students' values, interests, and priorities</li> <li>Long-term inquiry units</li> <li>Heterogeneous groups</li> <li>Mutual learning &amp; critical engagement with content</li> <li>Feedback and reflection</li> </ul>

How is this connected to our expectations for who is carrying the cognitive load?

## **More Strategies!**

- Storify
  - Improves memory
  - Situates learning in a relevant context
  - When students "storify" their understanding, it makes thinking visible and surfaces misconceptions
- Make learning social
  - Focus on collaboration
  - Use distributed expertise
  - Create opportunities for students to share learning with peers
- Gamify
  - o Give students a meaningful challenge
  - Use puzzles to engage/hook students and support connection-making



## **Concern** → **Control**

When you think of the Awareness domain, what is one thing within your sphere of control that you want to commit to this year?

Please share in the chat box!

# Please take a moment to complete our closing survey which has been emailed to you!

